LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأميركية
Lebanese American University

Louis Cardahi Foundation

وزارة السياحة اللبنانية
MINISTÈRE LIBANAIS DU TOURISME
LEBANESE MINISTRY OF TOURISM

THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

Cultural route of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel du Conseil de l'Europe

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

SARAFAND

الصرفند

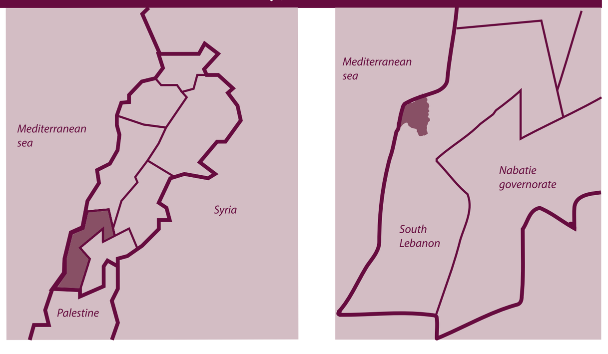
THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

مسار الفينيقيين

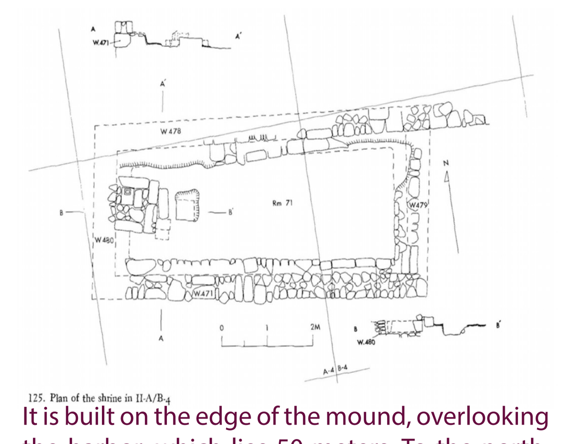
INTRODUCTION

Sarafand is a Lebanese local authority which is located in Saida (Sidon) District, an administrative division of South Lebanon Governorate. Sarepta is less prominent in the record, yet the appearance of the name of the city in ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, Hebrew, and Greek documents of various dates can provide a framework for its history.

In the eyes of the Western world, however, Sarepta enjoyed a prominence throughout more than a millennium which not even Tyre and Sidon could match. As early as the fourth century A.D., Christian pilgrims from Europe began to visit the site.

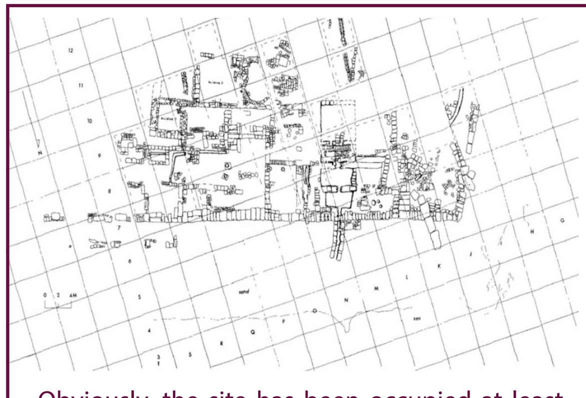


HISTORICAL MAPPING



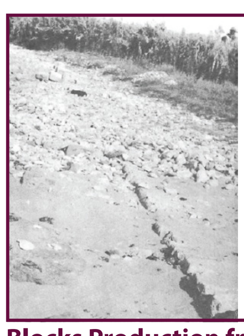
It is built on the edge of the mound, overlooking the harbor, which lies 50 meters. To the north, the industrial area of the city is located directly to the south and is separated from the shrine by a narrow street.

Discovery of The Shrine of Tanit-Ashtart at Sarepta in 1972.



Obviously, the site has been occupied at least two centuries before the Roman port was built. But there is no Phoenician presence.

The Roman Port Beside Modern Harbor Mound at Ras El-Qantara 133 B.C.



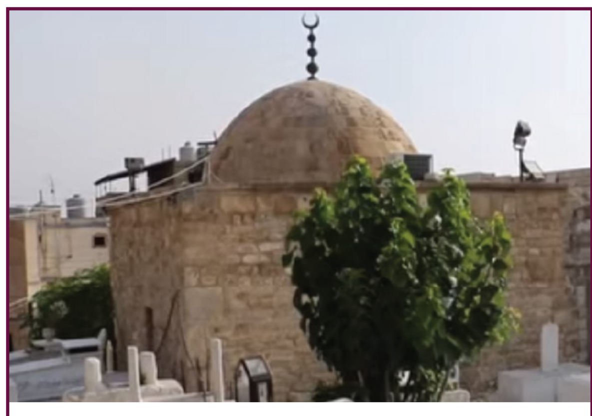
The stone blocks show layers of stratified deposits of ancient habitation that would provide at the very outset a record of human occupation at the site.

Blocks Production from the Sand at Ras Esh-Shiq



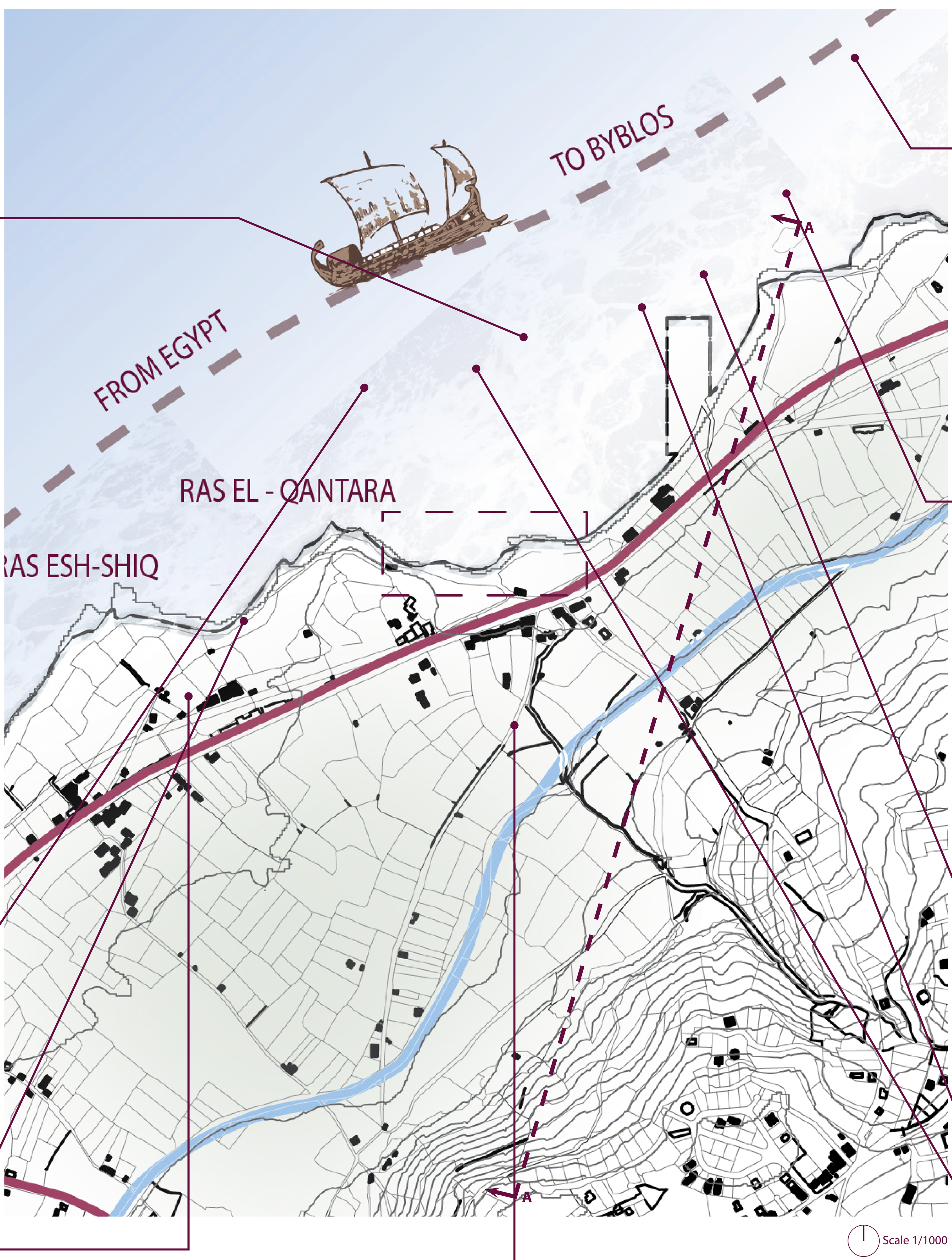
They still use the same techniques since the Phoenicians. The location has changed several times, it was mainly located on the coastal line during the Phoenicia period.

Glass Fabrication



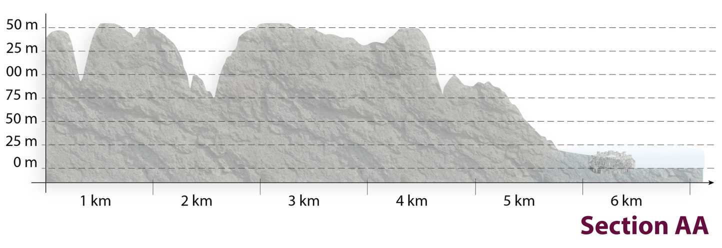
The Mosque of the Prophet Al-Khodr, originally a Medieval building, although nothing much of its old structure remains nowadays. Nevertheless, the religious significance of the place is still very strong.

Mosque of Abbas Al-Khodr



Legend

- Phoenician Civilization (Iron Age) 1200 – 333 B.C.
- Greek - Roman Period 333 B.C. – 300 A.D.
- Roman and Byzantine Period 64 B.C. – 635 A.D.
- Islamic Period 635 – 969 A.D.
- Ottoman Period 1516 - 1917 A.D.
- Lebanese State 1943 - Present
- Agricultural Land
- Sea Trade Road
- Land Trade Road



Section AA



The shrine of Abou Zar Al-Ghafari, an important Muslim jurisprudent who taught there in the first century of Hijra.

Shrine of Abu Abou Zar Al-Ghafari



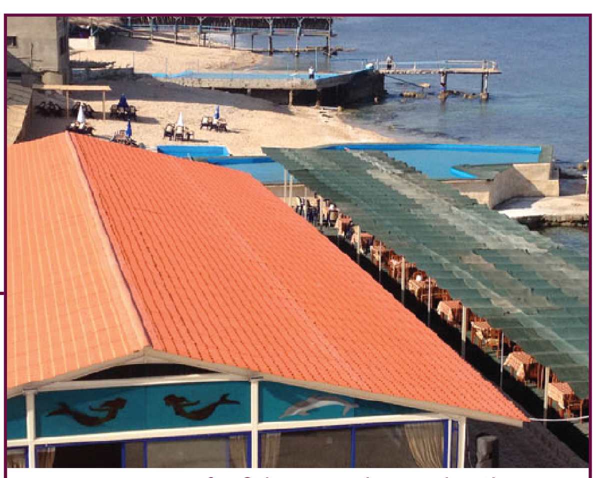
Harbors at a deep of 17 meters, two seaports each 100 meters but divided due to geological motion of the earth. Pavements prove the existence of a city that used to depend on the commerce and the sea during the Phoenician era.

Yarmouta



The Phoenician harbor became an Ottoman harbor afterwards.

Ottoman Harbor



It was a rest area for fishermen during the Phoenician period.

Khayzrane Cafe



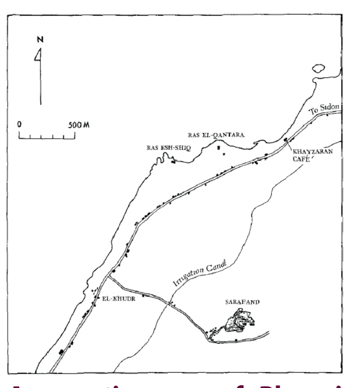
Modern Harbor



What was extracted from the murex and olive was crushed and pressed for their oil, and pottery was manufactured.

Industrial Quarter

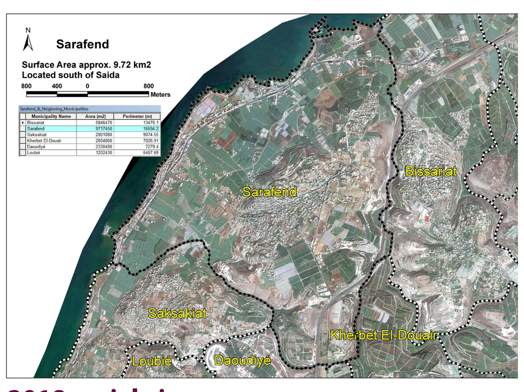
URBAN MORPHOLOGY



Assumption map of Phoenician time

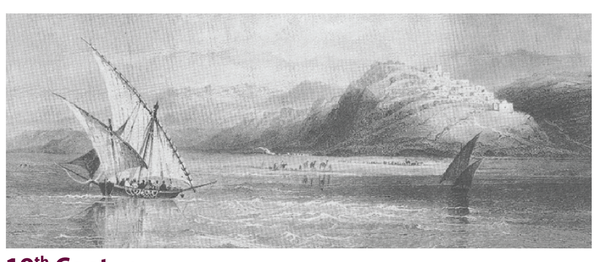


1970 aerial view

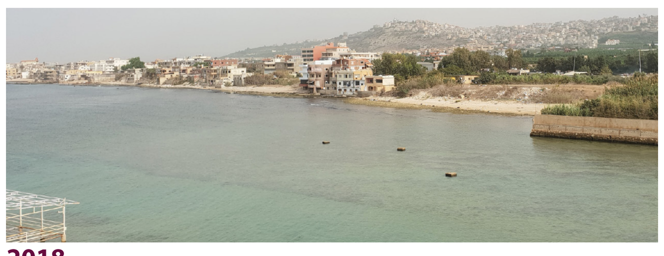


2018 aerial view

COMPARATIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

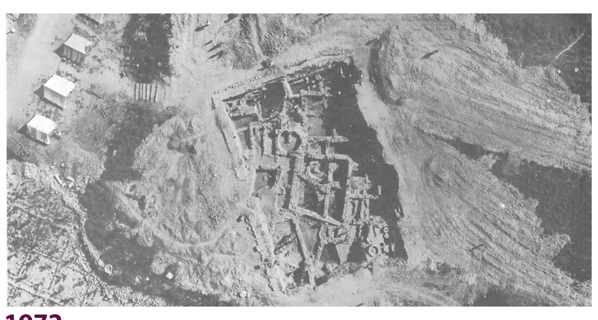


19th Century



2018

Following hard upon the individual pilgrims were the Crusaders. Toward the end of the 12th century, William of Tyre described the route which the Crusaders took as they marched from Sidon to Tyre in the preceding century. In advertently, he provides an important clue for the location of the city at that time. In describing the route southward, he remarks that *"They passed on the right the ancient city Sarepta of the Sidonians, the nurse of Elijah, the man of God."* Obviously, the new site of the village (Sarafand) has not been established, since that would have been as it is today, on the left of the coastal road.



1972



2018

The excavation site shown in the 1970's photographs could not be identified anymore. The site is full of bushes that covers the findings of a large archaeological site. It became not visible and inaccessible to the people.





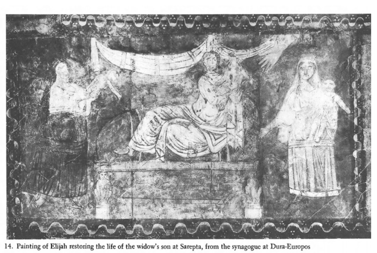
Ras Esh-Shiq Left to the Illegal Settlement Losing its Archaeological Importance.

CHRONOLOGY OF MAIN EVENTS

Second Half of Fifth Millenium B.C.
Development of ceramic technology while producing kilns.

3500 B.C. - Yarmouta City
Developed during the Phoenicianexpansion. Yarmouta became known as a bank and a place of exchange.
It was an important Phoenician city and known for its fishing and trade with Egypt, Beirut and Byblos. (An Egyptian Torso was found in Sarepta).



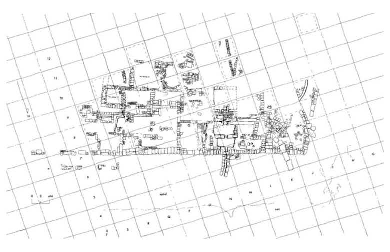


14. Painting of Elijah restoring the life of the widow's son at Sarepta, from the synagogue at Dura-Europos

560 B.C. - The Miracles of Eliajh
This dramatic story from the 9th century B.C. became in time a classic. A Jewish synagogue, built at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates in the third century A.D., was decorated with a mural that depicted in vivid colors the raising of the widow's son.

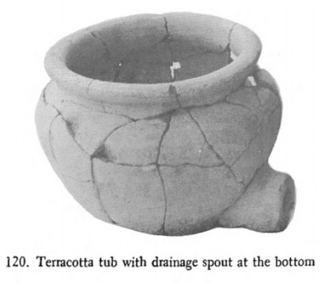
332 - 333 B.C. - Hellenistic Period
Coins of Seleucid mint and pottery which has long been known to be a characteristic of the period. This shows that Phoenicians had used coins in their trade systems.
So, the meaning of the name of the city refers to the Phoenicians' large trade network.



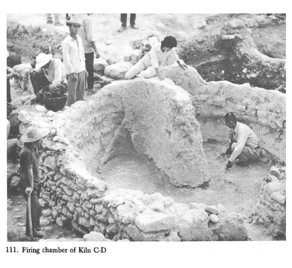


146 B.C. - Roman Port
It was used as a point of exchange with the surrounding civilization. Then a Byzantine port was built on its remains.

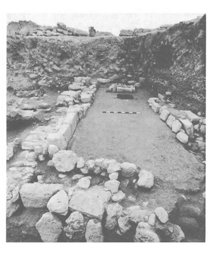
June, 1968 - First Excavation in Sarafand
The first excavation happened with James Pritchard, with the aim of recovering the Phoenician remains. As excavations were continued in the two areas which had been selected to test the stratigraphy. Sounding X had been an industrial sector, where dye was extracted from the murex, olives were crushed and pressed for their oil, and pottery was manufactured. Industrial use of the area had frequently destroyed the sequence of deposits of occupational debris. In Sounding Y, only two kilns and a few pits had disturbed this area, where people had lived simply in modest homes.



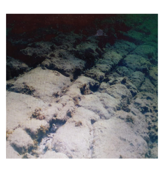
120. Terracotta tub with drainage spout at the bottom



1972 - Discovery of Tanit Ashtart Shrine
The archaeological remains, however, of a shrine or temple where Phoenicians worshiped their gods in the homeland, had not been known until the discovery of the shrine of Tanit-Ashtart at Sarepta in 1972.



2001- Diving in Sarepta
The remaining of pottery, stone pavement and walls were discovered in 2001 underwater. Those ruins show the existence of civilizations interventions.

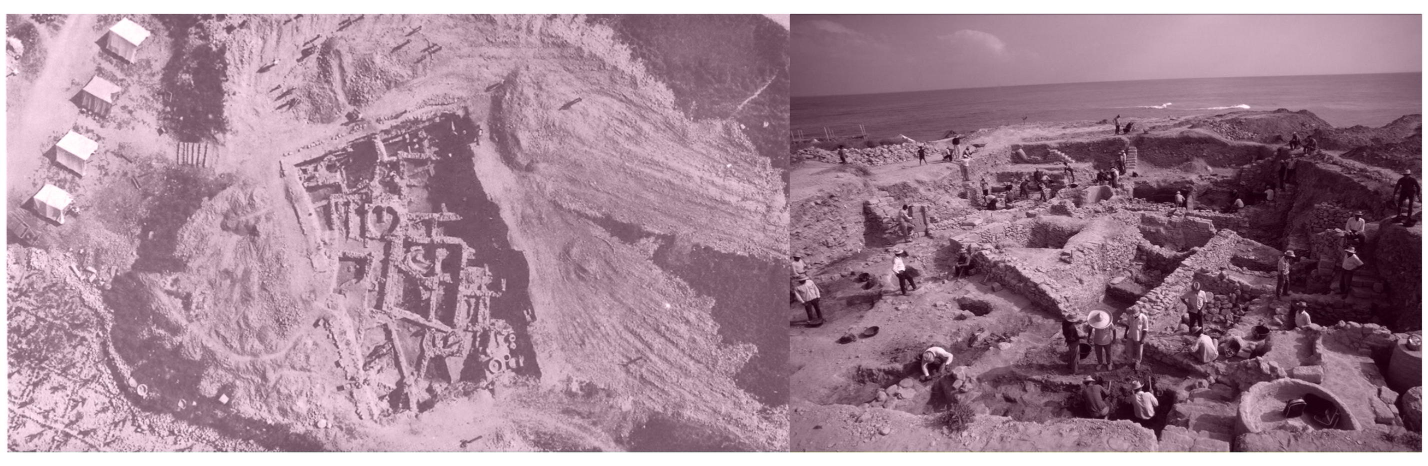




EVALUATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

The excavation site in Ras El-Qantara is totally abandoned since the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. The Phoenician ruins are not taken care of and are covered with bushes. Although, it is a very important Phoenician site, the only studies performed on it was in 1969 and that was the epitome of the site.

The mound at Fouad Ville is inaccessible to the public and has become part of the Hotel's property. The zoning is not fully protecting the archaeological sites.



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